

Message Text

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17

ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 L-03 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 AID-05 IGA-02 EB-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00

MC-02 ACDA-07 DODE-00 EUR-12 /083 W

----- 042276

R 281256Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA BAHRAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC 2955

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI UAE

AMEMBASSY DOHA QATAR

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAMA 0465

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS : MASS, BA

SUBJECT : BAHRAINI HELICOPTER PURCHASE PLANS

REF : (A) MANAMA 244, (B) MANAMA 288 AND RELATED

1. EMBASSY WAS VISITED APRIL 27 BY JOSEPH COOPER, MIDDLE EAST AREA DIRECTOR OF SIKORSKY AIRCRAFT; IT WAS FIRST TIME HE HAS VISITED THIS EMBASSY. HE SAID HIS FIRM HAS MADE OFFER TO BAHRAIN DEFENSE FORCE (BDF) FOR FOURTEEN "MULTI-MISSION" HELICOPTERS (WHICH HE INADVERTENTLY DESCRIBED AS "GUNSHIPS"). HE IS ANTICIPATING FINAL QUOTATIONS FROM COMPANY THIS WEEK AND HAS BEEN TOLD BY DEFENSE MINISTER/ HEIR APPARENT THAT "FINAL" DECISION WILL BE MADE NEXT WEEK ON PURCHASE. COMPETITORS ARE BRITISH AND FRENCH.

2. HE NOTED BDF AIM IS TO ESTABLISH BAHRAIN AS REGIONAL SERVICING/MAINTENANCE/REPAIR/TRAINING CENTER FOR MILITARY HELICOPTERS. SIKORSKY IS ALSO INVOLVED IN BID ON HELICOPTERS FOR ABU DHABI AND IT WAS IN ABU DHABI, DURING AN OFFICIAL VISIT BY BAHRAIN DEFENSE MINISTER, THAT FIRM FIRST CAME IN CONTACT WITH BAHRAINIS.

3. COOPER ASKED POSITION OK USG ON LICENSING EXPORT OF SUCH
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HELICOPTERS TO BAHRAIN. HE QUOTED DEFENSE MINISTER AS BEING

"WORRIED" ABOUT WHETHER USG WOULD APPROVE EXPORT TO BAHRAIN.
ON THE OTHER HAND, COOPER ALLEGED USG FAVORABLY INCLINED TO
THE ABU DHABI REQUEST - WHICH ENTAILS PURCHASE OF "CIVILIAN"
AND "VIP" HELICOPTERS, NOT THE "MULTI-MISSION TYPE" SOUGHT
BY THE BAHRAINIS.

4. EMBOFF INFORMED DIRECTOR THAT USG IS CONSIDERING GOB
INTEREST IN U.S. TECHNICAL ADVICE ON DEVELOPING HELICOPTER
WING IN LIGHT OF U.S. POLICY ON SUPPLY OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT
TO LOWER GULF AND THAT AS FAR AS WE ARE AWARE NO DECISION
HAS BEEN REACHED.

5. COMMENT: IF COOPER IS ACCURATELY INFORMED, IT WOULD
APPEAR BDF IS ALREADY CONSIDERABLY DOWN THE ROAD TOWARD A
HELICOPTER ACQUISITION DECISION.
TWINAM

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY PROCUREMENT, HELICOPTERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 APR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ellisoob
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976MANAMA00465
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760162-0713
From: MANAMA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760411/aaaaajej.tel
Line Count: 77
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION PM
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 MANAMA 244, 76 MANAMA 288
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ellisoob
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 JUN 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <20 OCT 2004 by ellisoob>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: : BAHRAINI HELICOPTER PURCHASE PLANS
TAGS: MASS, BA, US, SIKORSKY, (COOPER, JOSEPH)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006